



# California State Parks

## *Quick Facts*



Last updated 10/4/2005

### **At a Park Near You**

#### **Parks in your neighborhood**

- Almost half of California's state parks are adjacent to urban or residential development. There are 30 state parks in Los Angeles County, providing over 32,000 acres of public parkland to the most populous county in the state.
- The largest state park in the Los Angeles region is Topanga State Park (12,660 acres), considered the world's biggest wildland park within the boundaries of a major city. Topanga State Park extends from the Santa Monica Mountains to the beaches of the Pacific Ocean.
- The California State Parks Foundation sponsors the FamCamp program to introduce camping to families who would otherwise not have the opportunity. FamCamp helps community organizations or agencies work with selected parks throughout the state to set up a trip. The program provides all necessary camping equipment, campsites, and state park staff to facilitate the outing.
- Nearly 12,000 volunteers contributed almost 900,000 hours to California State Parks in 2004. Volunteers staff visitor centers, maintain trails, serve as camp hosts, give interpretive (educational) programs,

present special events and much, much more to share their love of parks with the visiting public. Many parks with volunteer programs are located in urban areas.

#### **Connecting with schools**

- Each year approximately 550,000 school children attend formal interpretive (educational) programs at state parks, underscoring the importance of parks as a component of the California Department of Education's standards and frameworks. Field trip statistics (2003/04 fiscal year):
  - Natural History and Cultural Heritage field trips - 536,000 students
  - Environmental Studies and Environmental Living Programs – 17,000 students
- California State Parks staff also visit schools, bringing the park to the classroom. Over 48,000 students benefited from this type of program in the 2003/04 fiscal year.
- More and more students live in urban areas where distance or economic and social barriers prevent them from visiting California State Parks. In response to these situations, California State Parks has initiated the Parks Online



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Resources for Teachers and Students (PORTS) program.

- Using California's K-12 High Speed Network, PORTS is able to deliver video conference presentations to classrooms from parks throughout the state.
- PORTS provides fully developed units of study that furnish support, structure, preparation and follow-up for the video conference. Students study science, history, language arts and other academic content standards while interacting with California State Park staff by video conference.

### **Grant Funds for Local Park Projects**

- Since 1965, California State Parks' Office of Grants and Local

Services has administered over \$2 billion in local assistance grants. Several bond acts have been approved by California voters, the most recent being Proposition 40, the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Act of 2002, which provided \$870 million in local assistance grants. These funds are being distributed through per capita and block grants, and competitive grants. A significant portion of these grant funds are utilized by local park and recreation districts, non-profit organizations, and other qualified recreation agencies to fund recreation facilities in communities all over California.

- The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Division has administered \$257.8 million in off-highway vehicle grant funds to local, tribal and federal agencies.